CGIAR GENDER Platform

Resource Hub Vision

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Initial scenario

The CGIAR Gender Platform represents the focal point for Gender equality research within the organization.

As such, it guides CGIAR's research and exposes its results to the general public.

Currently, the online system at gender.cgiar.org doesn't serve the purpose of organically present research outputs, nor it offers a clear presentation of the platform's vision and research approach.

This project aims to design a new online system that fits the communications needs of the platform, serving the CGIAR internal audience, as well as external users.

Design approach

We approached the discovery phase with three workshops:

- **Why**
  - discover a shared vision
  - model the audience
  - model the available and foreseeable content and their sources
- **What**
  - explore the written voice and tone
  - explore the competition
  - outline a viable content production flow
  - model the content gathering, editing, publication workflow
- **How**
  - explore the visual voice
  - explore content presentation
  - explore content categorization

Workshops results

Vision statement

We iteratively worked towards a shared vision statement that could clarify our goals and scope and guide us through this project.

We provide **evidence-based methods, tools, and insights** that enable **ourselves and others** to move towards **gender equality** in **food systems.**

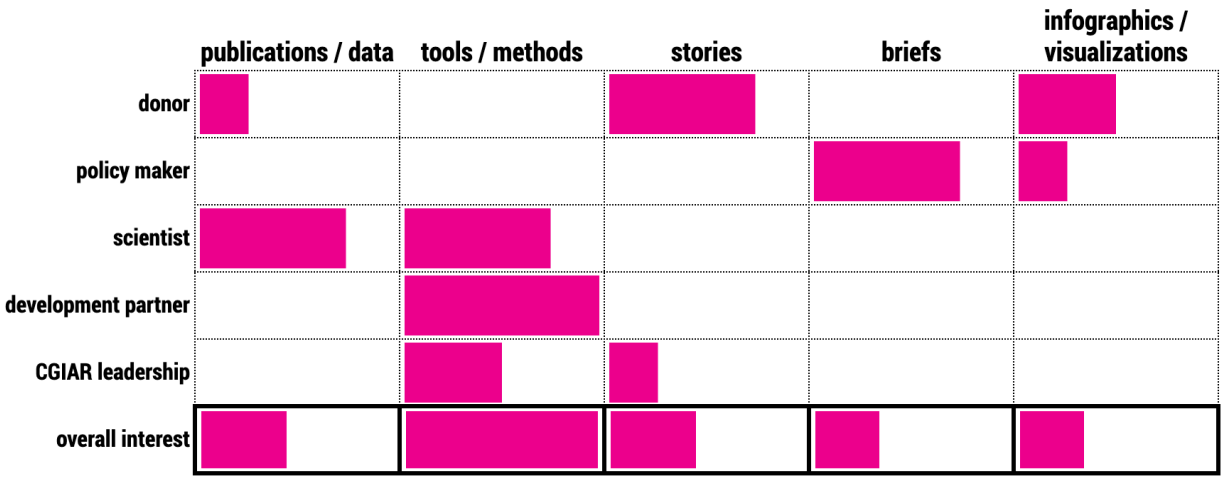
The current version highlights the platform's scientific foundation, its main products, the two-fold inward and outward focus, and its overarching objective.

Elements that haven't been captured in the statement but will have to be apparent are the **quality of research** and the availability of **solutions and good practices** among the methods and tools.

Audiences and types of content

Looking at real people's profiles, we inferred the audience segments that are most relevant to the platform and the types of content they might be more interested in.

The following matrix summarizes our findings, highlighting each content type's relevance for a specific audience segment and their overall relevance.



The most relevant types of content are:

- Publications/data
    - includes all scientific publications as well as datasets
- tools/methods
- Stories
    - includes blog posts / impact stories / news clippings / generic news
- Briefs
    - Includes articles that provide a concise presentation of one or more scientific publications
- Infographics / Visualizations

Events are also considered a relevant type of content.

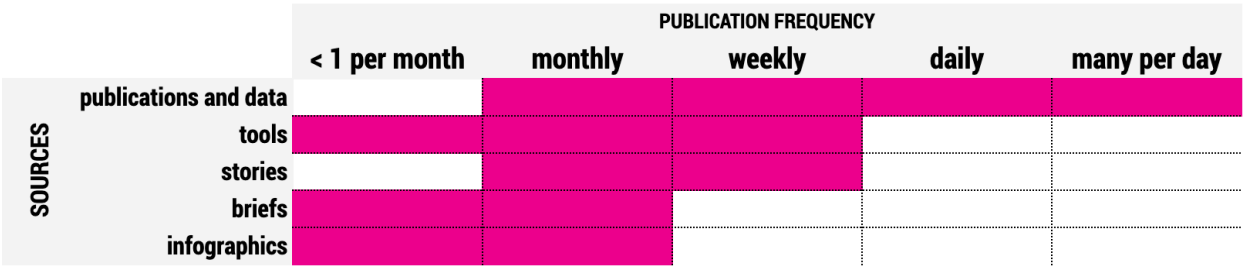
Content sources

We mapped available sources to content types as follows:

		CONTENT TYPES				
		publications / data	tools / methods	stories	briefs	infographics / visualizations
SOURCES	CGIAR publications	via GARDIAN / DSpace				
	non-CGIAR publications	manually selected				
	CGIAR stories			via RSS, curated		
	non-CGIAR stories			manually selected		
	platform modules		published directly on the website		published directly on the website	published directly on the website

Content flow

Exact metrics will be available once the publication system will be in place. For now we collected the team's predictions for publication frequency per content type:



Publication workflow

The comms team will have control over imported content (publications and stories) and will be able to activate a pre-publishing review workflow for content created by the modules.

The publication workflow will be fine-tuned over time, based on the frequency and quality of incoming content.

Imported content presentation

Publications and datasets

CGIAR publications and datasets are stored across different repositories, and most of them are hosted on CGIAR's DSpace instance, CGSpace.

There's a general agreement about the need to provide a coherent presentation for publications and a more user-friendly navigational interface than DSpace's. At the same time, it's advisable to avoid users to jump back and forth to DSpace while browsing multiple publications.

Therefore all publication metadata will be displayed on the website, with a link to the original file pointing at the source repository.

Other content types

Republish vs. Summary and link

The majority of the team favors showing a summary of each imported piece of content rather than featuring the entire article.

This approach provides greater visibility to the original author, requiring users to visit their website to read the entire article.

On the other hand, it impacts our website's experience, requiring an extra click and the need to re-orient in a different user interface and architecture. Yet, we must consider that today most users are familiar with multi-tabbed browsing.

Another technical motivation in favor of summaries is that some websites might not expose full articles in their feeds. And if they do, the original HTML markup might not blend well with ours.

Custom summaries vs. Imported summaries

Often descriptions in website feeds (RSS or other formats) are generated from the initial paragraphs of an article and therefore don't provide a comprehensive summary of its content.

There's a general agreement on the importance of writing a custom summary instead.

That would prove especially useful for specific audience segments that are more likely to spend less time on the website and browse multiple pages, rather than focusing on an in-depth exploration of individual elements.

Also, custom summaries help deliver a coherent tone of voice across the website, both for internally produced and imported content.

A comparison of all options is presented in the table below.
A fourth option is included, which offers a good compromise between effort and usability.

Custom summaries are only written for high-priority content.
Other articles will show either imported summaries or just title and link to the original article.

	editing effort	usability

full article	**medium**	if the article text is not exposed in RSS, it has to be copied manually. if HTML markup doesn't match, it has to be re-formatted	**high**	articles can be read without leaving the website
imported summary	**low**		**low**	summaries might not be clear and comprehensive
custom summary	**high**	each article's summary has to be written from scratch, based on the original article	**medium**	a general understanding can be obtained without leaving the website
custom summary for high-priority content (imported summary elsewhere)	**medium**	summaries have to be written for high-priority content only	**medium**	a general understanding can be obtained without leaving the website

Search engine visibility

If full articles are displayed, it is advisable to instruct search engines about the source's URL via `rel="canonical"` tags.
In this scenario, article pages on the platform website might be hidden from search engine results.

Otherwise, if custom summaries are written and related content is rendered in an article page, the `rel="canonical"` tag can be avoided since our page and the original page only have the title in common.
To provide proper attribution, a suffix can be attached to the HTML title of the page, e.g., "2019 sheep population datasets (from ILRI)".

Content selection and prioritization

The team unanimously agreed that a prioritization mechanism is necessary to help users browse through a potentially large amount of pages.

The system will provide a dashboard where newly imported content can be organized.

For each item, a series of quick actions will be available:

- Delete
- Stash
    - The item will be marked as processed but still available for future use.
- Publish as low priority
    - The item will be published as-is, with low priority.
- Publish as high priority
    - The item will be published as-is and will show on top of lists.
- Publish as highlight
    - The item will be published as-is and will show in the highlights area of landing pages (e.g., Publications page)
- Publish to home page
    - The item will be displayed on the home page and in the highlights area of landing pages.
- Queue for editing
    - The item will be added to the editing queue but kept unpublished.

All the operations will also be available while editing a single item.

Content categorization and access

Based on how content is logically structured, three main taxonomical axes emerged:

- Content type
  - Publication / Dataset
  - Story
    - Includes news, impact stories
  - Tool
  - Brief
    - Represents a concise presentation of one or more scientific publications
  - Event
- Theme
  - Models a specific area within gender research
- Region
  - Model a geographical area

At the moment, it is not clear if and to which extent geographical data will be available.
The system will offer the ability to tag items geographically, but the data will not be presented initially.
Once a relevant number of elements will be collected, the introduction of regional landing pages (and search tools) will be evaluated.

Custom content buckets

A potentially frequent use case for the website sees a user browse through content to collect a list of items, e.g., publications about a specific topic.

To mitigate the risk of losing a visitor that moves back and forth from our website, a functionality can be designed to support the creation of content buckets, where users can add pages with a single interaction (e.g., drag and drop or click on an icon).

The pages can be later exported or reviewed.

Website and resource hub

On several occasions, the discussion around the nature of our website emerged.
Is it a website *and* a resource hub, or are they the same thing?

Following the three workshops and looking at the proposed architecture, it appears that there should be no distinction between a “website” and a “resource hub”.

The website will be a single product that will organically present both **static** and **dynamic** content.

Static content includes everything about the platform’s vision, mission, structure, research approach, team, that is organized in a hierarchical fashion.

Dynamic content is centered around research products, articles, briefs, tools, methods, organized with taxonomies and accessible both via vertical landing pages (e.g. A research theme page) or horizontal, cross-page navigation (e.g. links to taxonomy terms or related content blocks).

Tone and voice

A two-fold communication necessity emerged during the workshops.

On the one hand, we want to allow for quick access to all the resources, with no-frills navigational elements and search tools.
On the other hand, we want to offer an environment that doesn't look sterile and doesn't merely function as a catalog.

The writing, as well as the interface, will have a distinctive character that looks both memorable and friendly.

To become the go-to place for gender research in the CGIAR, we'll have to stand out for how we welcome our users and how we write original content and curate others'.

We will produce content that is easy to consume, by means of accessible writing rendered through great typography and robust layout.

We will stay clear of stereotypes — both in writing and imagery.

Rather than abstracting our tone and voice in a complex editing manual, it's advisable to produce a series of examples where a piece of content or a topic is rendered in a website article, both in a good and a wrong way, explaining good and bad practices in writing and images selection.

Themes mapping

Through a mapping exercise we worked on a set of themes that looked complete and understandable.

There’s been a general agreement on this set, which labels will be reworked:

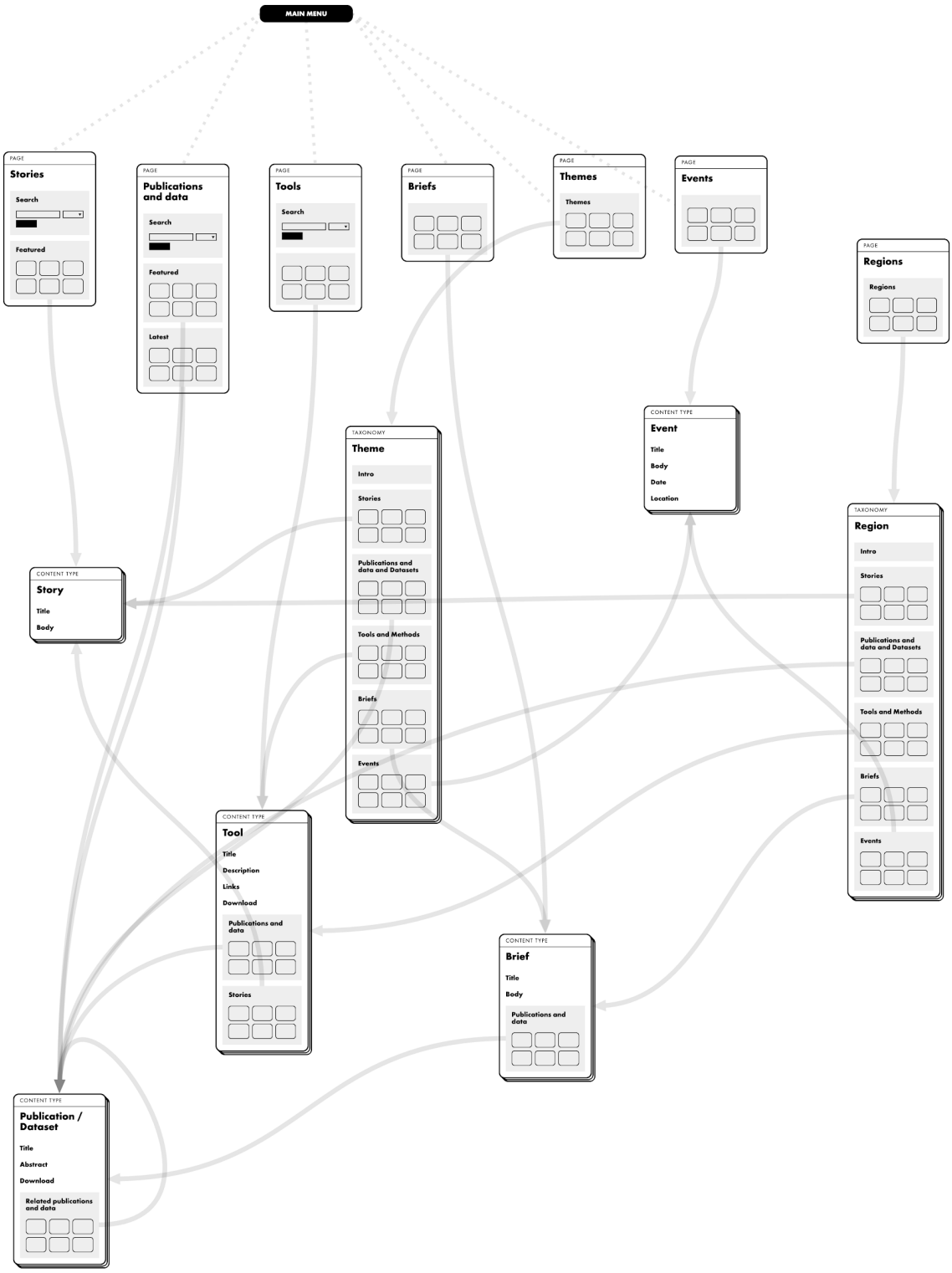
- Climate change
- Women’s empowerment / Gender transformative approaches / Social inclusion
- Crops and technologies
- Business, markets and value chain
- Nutrition, health and food security

Information architecture

Following the workshops, we refined the information architecture model for the dynamic part of the website.

The diagram highlights the connections between pages, and the role of taxonomies to organize content.

A complete definition of content types, taxonomies and fields will be detailed in the Data Model document.


MAIN MENU
PAGE
Stories
Search
Featured
PAGE
Publications and data
Search
Featured
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Briefs
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